



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY
2300 E STREET NW
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IN REPLY REFER TO
BUMEDNOTE 6550
BUMED-00NC
28 Sep 2001

BUMED NOTICE 6550

From: Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery
To: Ships and Stations Having Medical Department Personnel

Subj: GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUBSPECIALTY
CODE ASSIGNMENT FOR MILITARY ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSES (APNs)

Ref: (a) American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, Scope of Practice for Nurse Practitioners, 1998 (NOTAL)
(b) American Association of College of Nursing (AACN), 1996 (NOTAL)
(c) BUMEDINST 6320.66C
(d) BUMEDINST 6550.7A
(e) NAVMEDCOMINST 6550.2
(f) BUMEDINST 6550.10
(g) SECNAVINST 6401.2A
(h) ASD(HA) Policy Memorandum 96-047

1. Purpose. To update the educational requirements for APNs in the Navy health care delivery system and subspecialty code assignment for active and Reserve component APNs.

2. Background

a. Reference (a) describes APNs as registered nurses who provide primary health care and specialized health services to individuals, families, groups, and communities. For the purpose of this notice, APNs are defined as credentialed health care providers granted privileges within the scope of their practice. The three advanced practice specialties recognized by Navy Medicine are nurse anesthetist, nurse-midwife, and nurse practitioner. The current recognized nurse practitioner specialties include family practice, pediatrics, and women's health. Each type of APN is designated by a subspecialty code reflecting their specialty, education, and certification. Because of their scope of practice, it is important that the education prepares the APN to assume broad responsibilities in the military health care system.

b. Per recommendations outlined in reference (b), reference (c) was updated to indicate all APNs must possess a master's or doctoral degree which prepares an individual in nurse anesthesia, nurse-midwifery, or as a nurse practitioner. However, continued changes and refinements to APN education necessitated an in-depth study and analysis of existing APN educational programs and national certification requirements. Based on the recommendations of a Nurse Practitioner Task Force chartered by the Director, Navy Nurse Corps in June 2000, the following policy on APN educational requirements is outlined.

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3. Policy

a. Graduation from a master's or doctoral degree program which prepares an individual in nurse anesthesia, nurse-midwifery, or as a nurse practitioner, and is approved by an organization authorized by the Department of Education to accredit schools of nursing.

b. Graduation from a clinical master's degree program in nursing and satisfactory completion of a formal post-graduate certificate program in the desired specialty granting graduate level academic credit. These programs are most commonly referred to as post-master's certificate programs.

c. Nurses who graduated from an approved practitioner certificate program or received a graduate degree in a nursing specialty other than those listed therein and hold privileges in these advanced practice specialties as of the date of this notice are considered to have met the educational requirement.

d. Initial certification and re-certification, as prescribed by the specialty professional organization or the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) is required. The graduate nurse practitioner (GNP) is required to achieve national specialty certification within 12 months following successful completion of an APN master's or post-master's program.

e. The APN must possess a current license to practice professional nursing per reference (f). The states, District of Columbia, commonwealths, territories and United States possessions all provide variable recognition levels and license and/or certification requirements of APNs practicing in their respective jurisdictions. With increasing scrutiny from various regulatory agencies, all APNs are encouraged to also possess the current APN license or credential if it is required by the same jurisdiction that issued the license to practice as a registered professional nurse. Further guidance is being developed and will be issued when clarified.

f. Nurse Corps officers who decide to pursue an APN graduate degree on their own should submit a copy of their proposed curriculum to the cognizant Specialty Leader for review and recommendations before enrolling in the program. When applying for an APN subspecialty code, the officer should submit the following to the Career Plans officer and Specialty Leader:

(1) Copy of final transcripts.

(2) Proof of national certification.

g. For nurses who receive their graduate degree on their own, assignment to a subspecialty coded billet, (reference (g)) is not guaranteed, but may be negotiated with the detailee.

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h. Per reference (h), only APNs who have a graduate degree in a clinical specialty and board certification in an approved APN specialty are eligible for board certification pay. Submit requests for board certification pay to the Medical Department Special Pays (MED-527), Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, 2300 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20372-5300. APNs must submit a copy of their re-certification letter to continue receiving board certification pay.

i. The standard for educational requirements for APNs will continue to be monitored by the Director, Navy Nurse Corps (MED-00NC) to ensure APNs are prepared to meet the core competencies for their role in Navy Medicine. Commanding officers are responsible for ensuring the proper credentialing and privileging of APNs per reference (c). This policy supersedes any earlier memorandum distributed regarding APN graduate education or assignment of subspecialty codes.

j. Complete revisions or change transmittals to references (c) through (f) are being submitted to reflect this policy change.



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Deputy

Available at: <http://navymedicine.med.navy.mil/instructions/external/external.htm>